

REPORT OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

TO THE NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

CONFIRMATION HEARING FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVE & MONITORING OFFICER

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1. On 16th March 2021, the Panel received formal notification from the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner of the proposed appointment to the role of Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.
2. This report describes the recommendations of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel (hereafter referred to as “the Panel”) in respect of the proposed appointment of Mr Simon Dennis to the role of substantive Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (hereafter referred to as “the CE & MO”). It is submitted to Julia Mulligan, the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (“the Commissioner”) in accordance with the requirements of Schedule 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, (as amended by paragraph 8 of Schedule A2 to the Fire and Rescue Act 2004).
3. The report recommends that Mr Simon Dennis should be appointed to the role of substantive CE & MO to the Commissioner.
4. The Panel would like to thank the Commissioner and Mr Dennis for their attendance at the confirmation hearing on Wednesday, 24th March 2021, and for responding to the Panel’s questions.

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5. The Membership of the Panel for the Confirmation Hearing was as follows:

Craven District Council	Cllr Richard Foster
Hambleton District Council	Cllr Peter Wilkinson
Harrogate Borough Council	Cllr Michael Chambers MBE
North Yorkshire County Council	Cllr Carl Les
Richmondshire District Council	Cllr Helen Grant
Scarborough Borough Council	Cllr Carl Maw
Selby District Council	Cllr Tim Grogan
City of York Council	Cllr Ashley Mason
Santokh Singh Sidhu	Community Co-opted

Also in attendance at the meeting were the following:

Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner – Julia Mulligan (the Commissioner); Simon Dennis (Interim CE and MO to the Commissioner and proposed appointee), Michael Porter (Chief Financial Officer to Police and Crime Commissioner), Caroline Blackburn (T/Asst CE and MO), Tom Thorp (T/Asst CE and MO) and Tina James-McGrath (Office and Volunteer Manager).

North Yorkshire County Council – Diane Parsons (Panel Secretariat).

POWERS OF THE NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

6. In accordance with Schedule 1 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, (as amended by paragraph 8 of Schedule A2 to the Fire and Rescue Act 2004), the Panel is enabled to:
 - review the proposed appointment of a Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer, by holding a Confirmation Hearing within three weeks of notification being given (a ‘confirmation hearing’ is a meeting of the Panel, held in public, at which the candidate is requested to appear for the purpose of answering questions relating to the appointment);
 - make a report to the Commissioner on the proposed senior appointment;
 - include a recommendation to the Commissioner as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed; and
 - publish the report to the Commissioner made under this paragraph.
7. The Panel is required to assess the candidate’s capabilities and expertise at the hearing. In particular, they are required to determine whether, taking account of the minimum standards of professional competence and personal independence, the candidate meets the criteria set out in the role profile. This is done through scrutiny of the supporting documents provided by the Commissioner and by asking questions of the candidate relating to these two general principles.
8. The Commissioner may accept or reject the Panel’s recommendation as to whether or not the candidate should be appointed.
9. The Commissioner must notify the Panel of the decision whether to accept or reject the recommendation.

CONFIRMATION HEARING

10. The Confirmation Hearing was held remotely on 24 March 2021 and was live broadcasted.
11. Drawing on the submission provided by the Commissioner and Mr Dennis’s own personal statement, the Panel asked Mr Dennis a numbers of questions to assist them in establishing whether he met the minimum standards for the role.
12. In particular, the Panel were keen to establish how Mr Dennis would bring value to the substantive role, what he felt the most pressing challenges would be in the next year and to seek reassurance that he is

able to serve effectively under different Commissioners while maintaining independence in his advisory capacity.

13. Mr Dennis referred to the leadership role he has undertaken thus far in supporting the Commissioners in both North Yorkshire and Cleveland on programmes which have focussed on delivering efficiency. In respect of key changes and challenges, he identified that a significant programme of work for the CE in North Yorkshire going forward will be around the Risk and Resource Model for the Fire and Rescue Service. He also outlined anticipated changes/extensions to the Commissioner role as a result of the recent Home Office review on Commissioners. Mr Dennis felt that being able to fulfil the role on a full-time basis would afford greater opportunities around such areas of work.
14. The Panel was provided with examples around Mr Dennis's experience of working for different Commissioners, of different political persuasions, and of maintaining a robust and objective position – sometimes in difficult circumstances - where his independent counsel to the Commissioner had been key. Mr Dennis also acknowledged the importance of maintaining a solid relationship between the Commissioner's office, the CE and the Panel.
15. After a period of time in closed session, the Panel determined that Mr Dennis amply met the requirements for the role of substantive CE and MO.

RECOMMENDATION

16. On the basis of the information provided by the Commissioner; the discussions held in the Confirmation Hearing; and examination of the evidence in both the public meeting and the closed session; the Panel is pleased to recommend the appointment of Mr Simon Dennis to the role of Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

Cllr Carl Les

CHAIRMAN

25 March 2021